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STUDIES IN INTELLIGENCE



A collection of articles on the theoretical, doctrinal, operational, and historical aspects of intelligence.

A Comprehensive Commentary
AN INTERVIEW WITH
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
GEORGE J. TENET (S)

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A Studies Roundtable
**CREATING THE NATIONAL IMAGERY
 AND MAPPING AGENCY (U)**



VOL. 42, NO. 1, 1998

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DCI George J. Tenet and members of the *Studies in Intelligence* Editorial Board. From left to right: Peter Clement, William Nolte, the DCI, Brian Latell, L. Britt Snider, and Barry G. Royden.

Prussian Nobleman, SS Officer, and CIA Agent

The Case of Otto Albrecht Alfred von Bolschwing (S)

Kevin C. Ruffner

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The CIA generally avoided most of these intelligence fabricators, although it did fall victim to a number of scams.
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The situation in postwar Europe in the late 1940s and early 1950s offered many opportunities for exploitation. Just as black-marketeers took advantage of material shortages, others sold information to the competing powers. As tensions mounted between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, the rubble-strewn cities of Europe, especially those in Germany and Austria, became an “intelligence jungle.” (U)

One retired CIA officer recalled years later that “the inevitable result, in cold and hungry Europe of the time, was a proliferation of paper-mills such as had never been seen in Europe’s history. To those of us trying to make sense of it all, it seemed that every down-at-heel veteran of the Abwehr, the Gestapo, RSHA Amt VI, and all the Fascist organizations of Central and Southern Europe was peddling fabricated information sources to notional spy networks, and that CIC, MIS, the British FSS, the Austrian Stapo, the Foreign Service’s Peripheral Reports Officers, the Grumbach organization, the Gehlen organization, the Italian Carabinieri, Amt Blank, the French SDECE, and Radio Free Europe all were elbowing and shoving each other to buy the stuff, like so many women in Macy’s basement on the day after Christmas.”¹ (U)

The CIA generally avoided most of these intelligence fabricators, although it did fall victim to a number of scams.² Decades later, the bona fides of some CIA agents recruited during this period are still the subject of conjecture and

debate.³ Otto Albrecht Alfred von Bolschwing, a Prussian-born Nazi officer, is a case in point. Personality issues and doubts about his overall usefulness marred his work for CIA in Austria. Yet, the Agency failed to resolve these matters and even brought Bolschwing to the United States. Bolschwing’s presence in America subsequently attracted the attention of the Department of Justice, the GAO, and the US Congress decades after his espionage role. (U)

The Gehlen Connection

During the Allied occupation of Germany and Austria, it was not uncommon for American intelligence agencies to share assets with the Gehlen organization, the nascent West German intelligence service. As early as 1948, one CIA officer reported that the Germans “took over some of the informants

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the intelligence they furnished was of no value whatsoever.”⁴ The US Army’s Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) and the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) also picked up agents when they had been dropped by CIA’s predecessors, the OSS, the Strategic Services Unit (SSU), and the Central Intelligence Group (CIG). As early as December 1946, Headquarters told counterintelligence officials in Germany that “we believe our best policy would be steer clear of it and let such agents and informers who are being lured away by higher inducements go their merry way. It seems a shame that

Kevin C. Ruffner, a member of the History Staff, is on a rotational assignment with the Counterintelligence Center.

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Bolschwing

anyone is willing to pay so much for very low grade and mostly unverifiable information."⁵ (S)

As the Cold War intensified, the Gehlen organization, known initially by its codename RUSTY, became an important player in the intelligence war in Western Europe. The Germans, in particular, claimed to have unique access to intelligence behind the Iron Curtain. After the Agency assumed responsibility for the German intelligence organization in mid-1949,

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The Agency

took over a top Gehlen agent and made him a CIA source. (S)

Gaining control of one of Gehlen's agents presented an unusual opportunity for CIA, coming at a time when CIA had just recently assumed responsibility for ODEUM (CIA's new operational term for RUSTY).

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Coming to CIA's Attention

Otto Albrecht Alfred von Bolschwing seemed an ideal candidate for CIA recruitment. He was urbane and friendly, spoke and wrote English well, and offered unique insights into ODEUM's foreign intelligence activities. Operating in Austria, Bolschwing had reestablished his wartime ties to members of the Iron Guard, a Rumanian Fascist group, scattered throughout southern Europe. Bolschwing had joined RUSTY in 1947, although he gradually fell out of Gehlen's favor by 1950 because of his unwillingness to provide Pullach with operational information. Throughout 1949 and 1950, CIA debated whether to pick up Bolschwing from ODEUM and use him as an American source. (S)

In a late 1949 memorandum, Lucid discussed the future of American intelligence in Austria with Richard Helms, the chief of Foreign Branch M responsible for central Europe. Otto von Bolschwing figured prominently in Lucid's plans. "It would seem," Lucid declared, "that a basis does exist for splitting Bolschwing away from ODEUM and at the same time making the action work to AIS [American Intelligence Service] advantage. For example, he might be

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a collaborator of ours." Lucid did have some reservations about Bolschwing. "The suggestions regarding Bolschwing," he wrote, "should not necessarily be taken as an indication that we regard him as a topflight

operative. As a matter of fact, he may be, but if this is the case, he has apparently managed to keep a bushel handy for concealment purposes." Lucid also added, "Always giving the devil his due, he may indeed have great potentialities which could be nursed along, particularly in the political field. His proposal for the establishment of Balkan coverage contains nothing really startling, except perhaps through the voluminous claim to contact with all of those named."⁹ (S)

Lucid's mixed feelings about Bolschwing echoed earlier sentiments expressed by the CIG. A trace request to Headquarters from Austria in the spring of 1947 brought word that "Otto Albrecht Alfred Bolschwing is shady character."¹⁰ Upon receipt of this information, the counterintelligence chief in Austria responded, "After considering the information on subject provided by Headquarters, together with Heidelberg's reply to our inquiry, we have decided not to use subject in any capacity. No approach will be made to him." He added that "we will make an effort, however, to be kept informed on his activities, particularly with regard to the CE aspect."¹¹ (S)

Bolschwing's Background

Bolschwing's personal history was, indeed, "not the best."¹² Born in 1909 in Prussia, the son of a nobleman, he was orphaned at an early age when his father was killed in action on the Eastern Front during World War I. As a young man, Bolschwing worked with several trading companies and other businesses in Germany, Great Britain, and elsewhere in Europe. He set out to make

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By early 1950, CIA decided to take Bolschwing as an agent despite some initial reservations.

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his fortune in the British mandate territory of Palestine, where he became embroiled in early Nazi intelligence activities in the Middle East.¹³ (U)

Bolschwing's own "life history," (written for CIA in the fall of 1949) contained a number of fanciful exaggerations about his activities following his return to Germany in the mid-1930s.¹⁴ While he denied his Nazi past and claimed that he always resisted the regime in his statements to CIA, Bolschwing actually worked for the section of the German *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) dealing directly with the "Jewish problem." In 1940, Bolschwing took over the post of SD representative in Bucharest, Rumania, where he supported Iron Guardists in their abortive January 1941 coup attempt against Ion Antonescu. Bolschwing undertook this action without the approval of his superiors in Berlin, thus prompting the German Foreign Ministry to protest the SD's interference in the Reich's external affairs. Following the suppression of the Iron Guard revolt, Bolschwing spent a "few months" in confinement in Germany. His arrest and imprisonment as well as his subsequent demotion in the SS later enhanced his self-projected image as a Resistance fighter—an aspect that he played up by obtaining certificates from US Army units attesting to his underground activities at the end of the war.¹⁵ (S)

Bolschwing's statement in 1949 that "my political ideas were not on a nationalistic but European basis, any small-scale nationalism (chauvinism), to my mind is antihistorical, I further saw and still see no chance of individual European nationalism in a moral fight against world communism"

failed to convince CIA about his trustworthiness.¹⁶ One report noted that "most evaluations of B (based almost without exception on study of biography rather than personal association) run as follows: self-seeking, egotistical, and a man of shifting loyalties. His protests of democracy and, more particularly, feelings of Austrian nationalism seem to contradict his history."¹⁷ (S)

Another observer wrote, "He is an adventurer, a lover of intrigue, and a wire-puller who is fond of power." Furthermore, "Bolschwing states that in his position in Rumania he was able to frustrate many of the evil designs of the Nazi regime, but it should be remembered as a black mark against him rather than a point in his favor that he arranged the escape of [Horia] Sima and others at a time when these men were at the height of their crimes." The report added, "if one adds to these objections the difficulties inherent in Bolschwing's involvement with political reporting on Austria, it is hard to see how, among all our other commitments, much could be gained by having MOB [Munich operations base] take him over as the principal agent for three Rumanian projects."¹⁸ (S)

The Rumanian projects in question, ODEUM Projects 114, 115, and 116, involved members of the Iron Guard faction under Constantin Papanace. Based primarily in Italy, the group broke away from the main

body of Horia Sima's Iron Guard movement while quarantined in Germany during the war. Bolschwing's ODEUM projects claimed to have widespread political and military coverage throughout Rumania through his Iron Guard contacts.¹⁹ After reviewing Bolschwing's potential, James H. Critchfield, chief of CIA's Pullach operations base (POB), commented, "We are convinced that Bolschwing's Rumanian operations, his connections with the Papanace group,

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make him a valuable man whom we must control"²⁰ (S)

CIA Takes Bolschwing

By early 1950, CIA decided to take Bolschwing as an agent despite some initial reservations. In late January, Bolschwing met with Gehlen and discussed the terms of his leaving ODEUM. Bolschwing, in turn, informed US intelligence about this development, and Critchfield then spoke with Gehlen about the details of Bolschwing's departure.²¹ Ironically, Critchfield found that "UTILITY [Gehlen] expressed conviction that the Papanace connection is of great value and should be salvaged" and that he "strongly recommended that the AIS in some way establish connection with Bolschwing and attempt to obtain from him a comprehensive description of these operations."

Consequently, Critchfield directed

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Bolschwing's first
case officer, to contact Bolschwing to
(b)(3)(n)
learn more about his work with the
Rumanians.²² (S)

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Shortly afterwards, [redacted] reported on his contact with Bolschwing and provided a description of his sources, both Rumanian and Austrian.

[redacted] stated that "UNREST [Bolschwing's CIA cryptonym issued in February 1950] has risen steadily in the opinion of this case officer and POB in the last six months... He is unquestionably an extremely intelligent person, an experienced intelligence operator, a man with unusually wide and well-placed circle of friends, acquaintances, and sources, and a man whose grasp of the political-intelligence field throughout the Balkans, and, to a lesser degree, in Western Europe, is of a high order."²³ Both [redacted] and Critchfield were impressed by Bolschwing's motives to work for American intelligence as opposed to staying with Gehlen. "Probably the single ambition of Bolschwing," the chief of POB observed, "which is greater than that of playing a key role in Austrian intelligence is to become an American citizen and work in some capacity in political and intelligence affairs in Europe or in the United States as an American citizen."²⁴ (S)

(b)(1)
(b)(3)(n)**A CIA Coverup**

CIA's interest in Bolschwing soon extended to concealing his Nazi past. In early 1950, the Austrian Ministry of Interior investigated Bolschwing's status in that country (Bolschwing was a German citizen) and requested his Nazi Party records from the US Army's Berlin Document Center (BDC). When Pullach received word from CIA's Berlin operations base (BOB) about this request, it immediately asked that his file be withheld. A BOB officer, [redacted] agreed to pull Bolschwing's records

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and hold them separately, although he warned that Bolschwing was prominently mentioned in the "German Primer."²⁵ In a revealing memorandum to Pullach, [redacted] forwarded his recommendations:

1. We would like to draw your attention to some circumstances, which, in my opinion, make it unwise to have a negative file check on such persons as von Bolschwing.

2. The files at the Berlin Documents Center as to Nazi membership and SS membership, as well as the SS personnel files, are so complete that it is unlikely that any person checked, who was a member of either of these two organizations, would not be found in the files. On top of this, the persons you are dealing with are so well known and their background so well publicized in the past that I deem it improbable that you can protect them from their past history.

3. At the end of the war, we tried to be smart and changed the name of several members of the SD and Abwehr in order to protect them from the German authorities and the occupation authorities. In most cases, these persons were so well known that the change in name compromised them more than if they were to face a denazification court and face the judgment which would have been meted out to them. Meanwhile, the developments in Germany and probably also in Austria have been such that membership in the SS, in the SD, or in the Abwehr no longer is regarded as a strike against any personality. Since I regard it impossible to keep secret such associations, except in cases where a person was a clandestine agent of a given organization, I request you to reassess the advisability of withholding

information available in the Berlin Documents Center.

4. For the record, I would like to state, however, that we can withhold such information if desired.²⁶ (S)

[redacted] commented on CIA's efforts to obscure the German's Nazi (b)(1)
(b)(3)(n) background:

UNREST requested us to extract or block files which he believed were in the Berlin Document Center, to prevent their being sent to Austria in case of a request for them. This was done. These files, of which we have a copy, show that UNREST became a member of the NSDAP in 1932 with the number, 984212. This is mentioned in his personal history. He was a member of the SD Hauptamt and in 1940 was promoted to Obersturmfuehrer, in 1941 to Hauptsturmfuehrer. In February 1945, he was demoted to enlisted man in the SS and thrown out of the organization. UNREST explains in his autobiography that he received in 1935 a predicated membership in the party which made him appear to have been a member since 1932. Subject was arrested by the Gestapo first in the winter of 1937-38, later in 1942 in Greece, and in September 1942 in Vienna, when he was sent to Berlin and held in a Gestapo prison until April 1943. No records of these arrests appear in the file from the Berlin Document Center. UNREST's statement in his personal history, "that he held no real SS membership and that his party

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Bolschwing

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CIA was disappointed with
what little information
Bolschwing provided
about his operational
activities.

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membership was somehow mysterious" refers probably to the fact that, as an SD man, he automatically became a member of the SS and that he received his party membership in 1935, but ostensibly belonged beginning in 1932. We believe that further explanation of UNREST's SD, SS, and NSDAP connections are in order and will request that he provide it. We will later explore UNREST's reasons for keeping these files from the Austrians.²⁷ (S)

(b)(1) [redacted] soon learned that (b)(3)(n) [redacted]olschwing's ostensible reason for leaving the Americans deny his Nazi record to the Austrian Government centered around his own suspicious business activities in that country. Bolschwing worked in an American-sponsored firm, the Austria Verlag Gmbh, but he ran into tax problems with the Austrians. As matters developed, CIA denied Bolschwing's BDC file not only to the Austrians but also to the Army's 430th CIC Detachment and the Criminal Investigative Division (CID). This problem dragged on through 1950, eventually leading CIA to request CID's assistance in stalling any Austrian investigation of Bolschwing.²⁸ While both CIA and CID decided against taking any action in Bolschwing's favor, CID declined to provide any assistance to the Austrian probe. The Austrian Government apparently dropped the case by the end of 1950 through lack of evidence.²⁹ (S)

Performance Questions

In the midst of Bolschwing's legal problems, CIA also expressed dissatis-

faction with Bolschwing's overall performance. Given a new cryptonym of USAGE in March 1950, Bolschwing failed to redirect his efforts to expand his coverage in southeastern Europe; he preferred to supply "political information, largely overt" about internal Austrian matters. "This," Critchfield noted in August 1950, "is quite contrary to our desires, since our primary interest is in fact in the Balkans and not in Austria." At a meeting with Bolschwing that month, Critchfield told him explicitly:

USAGE must immediately shift his emphasis not only to clandestine operations into the Balkans, but within this field must get down to the business of reporting detailed operational information and bridle his own tendencies to produce political and sociological studies, interesting from an historical and academic point of view, but not the type of material which will ensure continuance of his salary. The history of the Legionary Movement in Rumania, which he has been preparing for from four to six months, will be of interest and possibly add some new information on the subject. However, USAGE must first establish his position with us as a clandestine operator before we are willing to finance the exploitation of his intellectual interest in the Balkan problem.³⁰ (S)

Bolschwing reacted with surprise to the American discontent with his "reporting," and he insisted that "his Austrian coverage and connections as the aircraft carrier from which he can operate into the Balkans." He promised, however, to expand his contact with Papanace's Rumanian sources as well as activate two operations in Hungary.³¹ Bolschwing, in fact, traveled to Rome with Austrian Iron Guard leader Ion Magarit to consult with Papanace about resurrecting nets throughout Rumania and Greece. Bolschwing, posing as US Army Capt. Albert A. Eisner (CIA provided this cover), never fully reported the results of his Rome trip, and nothing really came out of his collaboration with the Iron Guards.³² (S)

CIA was disappointed with what little information Bolschwing provided about his operational activities. Bolschwing did provide source identities in his networks, although the Agency dropped the Papanace connection in early 1951 as too expensive and duplicative of information already obtained in Italy.³³ Pullach base also questioned the effectiveness of his ongoing Austrian projects and proposed Hungarian projects. In the summer of 1951, the Agency summarized that "it seems apparent that while Pullach relations with USAGE have been cordial, and while USAGE has professed to be completely cooperative, Pullach has not been much more successful than ZIPPER in terms of overall results." POB's Critchfield added, "There appears to be little hope that he will ever develop into a first-class agent."³⁴ (S)

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Bolschwing

CIA Transfers Bolschwing

Rather than drop Bolschwing as an unproductive agent, Pullach base transferred USAGE to the Salzburg operations base (SOB) in Austria. The Agency made this move after much discussion among Pullach, Salzburg, Vienna, and Washington because Headquarters felt that Bolschwing was better suited to report on internal Austrian matters than he could on activities behind the Iron Curtain. Headquarters wanted [redacted]

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[redacted] unit in Austria, to determine if Bolschwing should be retained by American intelligence. James Critchfield had initially supported the CIA's takeover of Bolschwing from Gehlen. Only a few months later, he now expressed serious reservations about the [redacted] man agent.

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If an agency takes him over without knowing his past, they will inevitably be bogged down in a series of "assessment periods" and grandioses schemes employing scores of people to exploit shadowy figures in the target area via courier lines which never seem to materialize. They will be faced with large payrolls for piddling returns, and masses of paper on all the relatively inconsequential aspects of his operation.³⁵ (b)(1)
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His new case officer in Salzburg, [redacted] however, found Bolschwing to be "reliable, efficient, amenable to direction, and can be increasingly guided into activities directly supplementary to Austrian station activities."³⁶ [redacted]

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[redacted] in April 1952, [redacted] reported to Headquarters that USAGE "is genuinely

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Bolschwing's new case
officer accepted his
explanation about his Nazi
past without qualms or
unusual questions.

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devoted to the United States; he possesses truly extraordinary energy and efficiency; and he will cheerfully accept and is anxious to receive direction and guidance." [redacted] excused Bolschwing's previous failure with Pullach base because "it would appear that his past sins—which were in any event chiefly the result of lack of thorough direction—may be forgiven." In [redacted] eyes, Bolschwing "may be considered one of the most valuable assets of the Austrian station."³⁷ Bolschwing's new case officer accepted his explanation about his Nazi past without qualms or unusual questions. (S)

SOB had big plans for Bolschwing, who now claimed to have several new projects, including penetration operations into Czechoslovakia, intelligence sources on the Soviets' strength in their zone in Austria, [redacted]

[redacted]³⁸ For the next two years, Bolschwing (now known as GROSSBAHN after his transfer to Salzburg) assisted CIA in gaining intelligence on Soviet order of battle while also providing support to SOB's other collection operations against the Soviets. [redacted] (b)(1) worked for CIA [redacted] (b)(3)(n) [redacted]

In early 1953, CIA estimated the total yearly cost for Project GROSSBAHN (including Bolschwing and his sources) at (b)(3)(c)³⁹ (S)

Going to America

Bolschwing's main activity during this period focused on gaining admittance to the United States. In early September 1952, [redacted] concurred with several other CIA officials that (b)(3)(n) Bolschwing should depart Austria for America for security purposes. Noting his "long and faithful service for US intelligence," [redacted] felt that (b)(1) "the granting of citizenship and contract agent clearance to GROSSBAHN would permit him to concentrate his full energies on operations and his own support problems and to integrate his activities directly with DYCLAIM [CIA] systems and targets." [redacted] the chief of SOB, concurred in this recommendation and added:

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We are certainly aware of the exceptional measures we are asking in GROSSBAHN's case, but we feel that the action will be most beneficial to the operations of this base. GROSSBAHN is an exceptional individual and offers, we believe, sufficient long-range potential to warrant extraordinary measures to get him on the team. He is devoted to United States interests, vitally interested in and capable of long-term intelligence work, and has all the earmarks of a professional intelligence operator and executive. Coupled with his demonstrated loyalty and reliability, these qualities make him a very rare bird, and one we should go to considerable pains to exploit.⁴⁰ (S)

To support Bolschwing's immigration, [redacted] prepared a packet of material pertaining to Bolschwing and his intelligence work. Among his

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Bolschwing

various reports, Bolschwing wrote another autobiographical account of his life, Nazi activities, and work for the Resistance. After reciting his story (in a more embellished form than his 1949 account), Bolschwing now exclaimed "I may also state that I have never been in the pay of SS or the party or the German Government, and I flatter myself that at least in this respect I am an exception."⁴¹ (S)

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Upon the receipt of [redacted] packet, Headquarters commended Salzburg's efforts to provide better security for its operations and personnel, although Bolschwing's proposed immigration also raised several issues. Officials in Washington expressed concern whether the Austrian station understood the legal requirements for a foreigner to gain an immigrant visa and obtain US citizenship. The process, Washington declared, was not as simple as just bringing Bolschwing to America for three months and then returning him to Austria. On another note, Washington asked what advantages Bolschwing would have as an American citizen and a long-term agent in Austria as opposed to his current status.⁴² Another desk officer worried that Bolschwing could become dissatisfied once he came to the United States. As a note of caution, Headquarters warned that "in the event that it is finally decided to go through with the proposed course of action, GROSSBAHN should clearly understand that we do not and cannot assume unlimited responsibility for him."⁴³ (S)

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The Headquarters communique engendered more discussion in Austria.⁴⁴ [redacted] Bolschwing's latest case officer, detailed in a lengthy memorandum about SOB's reasoning behind Bolschwing's

immigration to the United States(b)(1) the spring of 1953. [redacted] defende(b)(3)(n) Salzburg's course of action because "we feel GROSSBAHN's back-ground and experience qualifies him for consideration in a position as closely approximates that of staff sta-tus as his citizenship status will allow." [redacted] added that "we will (b)(1) all possible to imprint in his min(b)(3)(n) that taking the initial steps toward US citizenship will in no way oblige us, morally or otherwise, to assist him in his relocation should the course of events force his sever-ance with KUBARK [CIA]."⁴⁵ (S)

In late August 1953, Headquarters cabled Austria and granted its permis-sion to bring Bolschwing to the United States.⁴⁶ The Agency, how-ever, refused to use its special legal authority and warned that it may take some time for the INS to waive Bolschwing's Nazi Party membership and allow him to enter the United States. CIA also demanded that it wanted to terminate its association with Bolschwing upon his immigra-tion "unless much stronger, more specific plan presented for future work upon return to Austria. On basis past performance we [are] unconvinced future efforts as recruiter will be productive enough to warrant undertaking sponsorship his return. Such sponsorship," Wash-ing-ton added, "[is] bound to make ultimate disposal much more diffi-cult."⁴⁷ (S)

Consequently, the Agency took steps to have Bolschwing admitted as an immigrant under the regular Ger-man quota, and he obtained an immigrant visa at the American Consulate in Munich in August 1953. The Agency's Eastern Europe (EE) Division approached the Alien Affairs division for assistance in coor-dinating Bolschwing's movement



Von Bolschwing in 1953. (S)

with the INS. From the beginning, CIA made no attempts to conceal Bolschwing's NSDAP membership or his SD service. EE, however, did not go into any great detail about his past other than repeating Bolschwing's own stories.⁴⁸ Mean-while, CIA in Austria "rechecked" third agency files, notably CIC and Army G-2, for references pertaining to Bolschwing. Two of the docu-ments (both derived from informants) pinpointed Bolschwing as a member of Adolf Eichmann's staff.⁴⁹ (S)

CIA reacted seriously to the local traces and gave Bolschwing a [redacted] examination in September 1953.⁵⁰

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Bolschwing's immigration visa had been procured solely through CIA's efforts despite the objections of the INS.

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example, about his connection to Eichmann, Bolschwing claimed that he had met him only twice and refused to offer to join the "Eichmann Sonderkommando." After "detailed discussion" on this point, the examiner concluded that "it does not appear that subject has been withholding any important information regarding Eichman[n], but, considering his initial reaction to the question, it is some minor fact related to the matter that subject is unwilling to mention."⁵¹ (S)

When asked about any official positions that he had held with the Nazis, Bolschwing "produced significant reactions every time that particular questions was asked." The [redacted] operator then compared

Bolschwing's reactions to questions that dealt with his activities both before and after the end of the war. "It is this examiner's considered opinion that this difference is not due to any deception but rather to the fact that subject is unable to recall all the exact details behind all the activities that he has engaged in prior to the war and during the war, and therefore becomes emotionally disturbed by the thought that he might have forgotten some essential point."⁵² (S)

Despite the fact that CIA had already told the INS about Bolschwing's NSDAP membership, Agency officials in Austria advised him not to admit this fact after his arrival in the United States.⁵³ CIA worried that if Bolschwing admitted this at a later date, the INS "would be forced, for appearances sake, to follow the letter of the law" and deport the German. Bolschwing's immigration visa had been procured solely through CIA's efforts despite the objections of the INS [redacted]

[redacted] also told Bolschwing not to

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course, we are asking that they grant such a favorable interpretation.)⁵⁵ (S)

contact any member of the CIA in the United States, except in case of "dire emergency." This restriction included the renewal of social contacts or trying to reenter the intelligence business.⁵⁴ (S)

Headquarters quickly responded to the field station's request about what Bolschwing should state about his Nazi record. In addition to warning Bolschwing against applying for any sensitive or government jobs, EE elaborated on what approach Bolschwing needed to take in the United States:

Assuming that he has not denied Nazi affiliations on his visa application form, he should definitely not deny his record if the matter comes up in dealings with US authorities and he is forced to give a point-blank answer. Thus, if asked, he should admit membership but attempt to explain it away on the basis of extenuating circumstances. If he were to make a false statement on a citizenship application or other official paper, he would get into trouble. Actually, GROSS-BAHN is not entering the United States under false circumstances, as ODURGE [INS] will have information concerning his past record in a secret file. He will enter legally under an ODURGE interpretation of the provisions of the immigration law applicable to his case. (Of

By the end of 1953, Bolschwing's only real duties involved his preparation to leave Austria with his wife and son. He had already turned over his agents to CIA case officers, although SOB expected his departure to be delayed until January 1954. The layover required an extension of Bolschwing's immigrant visa which expired in December 1953.⁵⁶ The base, meanwhile, tied up loose ends—a chore complicated once again by the fact that Bolschwing had never paid Austrian taxes. The Agency circumvented this dilemma by having Bolschwing and his household baggage leave the country under the identity of Capt. Albert D. Eisner—a CIA pseudonym that Bolschwing had used in his earlier tax battles.⁵⁷ (S)

In wrapping up its affairs with Bolschwing in Austria, CIA summarized the course of events that resulted in his immigration. "It was the consensus of opinion (Headquarters, VOB, and SOB) that agent's time in Austria had been used up; he was too badly compromised and too well identified as being a KUBARK agent in all circles." [redacted] stated that "GROSSBAHN was told that his days of usefulness in Austria were rapidly drawing to a close, and, if he were ever to realize his ambition of getting to the States and becoming a US citizen, now is the time to do it." CIA also advised Bolschwing that "if he did not accept the terms being offered to him at present, no guarantee could be made as to his ultimate future."⁵⁸ (S)

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Bolschwing

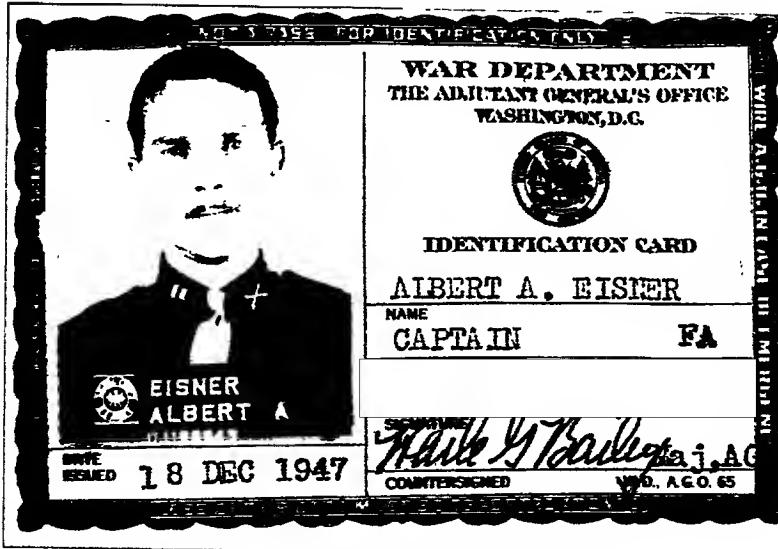
(b)(6)

As he left Austria for the United States (under the sponsorship of [redacted] who had met Bolschwing at the end of the war), the German agent expressed his pleasure: "I have regarded it an honor to serve the United States and its government, and I feel utmost gratitude that I am admitted to the United States to become a citizen."⁵⁹ Bolschwing and his family quickly settled in America. Writing from his hotel in New York City to his CIA point of contact, Bolschwing admitted, "I do wish to express my thanks for the excellent arrangements with the immigration authorities. We were called for on the boat and the chief inspector, who was in possession of a govt. memorandum signed by Assistant Commissioner Hogan, personally saw to our immediate being passed through all formalities."⁶⁰ (S)

With a sigh of relief, Headquarters reported the safe arrival of Bolschwing in New York to Agency personnel in Austria. EE Division (b)(1) stated "it seems difficult to believe (b)(3)(n) that the GROSSBAHN case is at last at an end, and we sincerely hope that he has said a permanent good-bye to intelligence activities."⁶¹ Bolschwing soon settled into a new routine in the United States, working with various firms in New York and California; he became an American citizen in 1959. (S)

Bolschwing's Ties With Eichmann

Following the apprehension of Adolf Eichmann in 1960 and his subsequent trial and execution in Israel, the CIA examined its records concerning the "architect of the Final Solution." M. Paul Hartman of the Counterintelligence Staff discovered that Bolschwing actually played a



(b)(6)

CIA-provided US Army ID card in the name of Capt. Albert A. Eisner. (S)

larger role in the SS than he had previously admitted. At the same time, some of Bolschwing's former CIA contacts in Austria, including [redacted] grew suspicious of GROSSBAHN's claims. In 1961, [redacted] stated that one of Bolschwing's agents had proven "fraudulent" following Bolschwing's departure to the United States.⁶² The Agency, however, did not take any action against Bolschwing after learning about his false record, beyond asking him to withdraw his application for a US Government-sponsored position in India.⁶³ In 1963, Headquarters informed its German station and bases that Bolschwing would be in Europe on a private visit and that he had no connection with the Agency.⁶⁴ (S)

SLU Discovers Bolschwing

Over a decade later, in 1978, Bolschwing came to the attention of

the Special Litigation Unit (SLU) of INS during its investigation of the wartime role of Valerian Trifa, a Rumanian Iron Guard leader, and now a bishop in the United States. Eugene M. Thiroff, an SLU attorney, inquired about certain German officials posted in Rumania in 1941, and he requested information from CIA on Otto Albrecht Alfred von Bolschwing, a German SS captain and the SD's representative in Bucharest during the early years of World War II.⁶⁵ Thiroff's request raised alarm bells in CIA because of Bolschwing's extensive record in the Agency. A quick review of these files by both CIA and Martin Mendelsohn, SLU's chief, revealed that Bolschwing "may not have been totally frank when he neglected to mention past membership in the Nazi Party" upon applying for naturalization in 1959.⁶⁶ By early 1979, SLU launched a separate investigation of Bolschwing's immigration and his wartime activities; ironically,

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Bolschwing

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**Pressure mounted in 1980
as famous Nazi-hunter
Simon Wiesenthal
announced Bolschwing's
presence in the United
States.**

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(b)(3)(c) Mendelsohn had initially planned to use Bolschwing as a witness against Trifa. [redacted] an attorney with CIA's Office of General Counsel, warned in early March 1979 that an investigation of Bolschwing threatened the Agency because a preliminary examination of his records raised a number of "obvious questions" about his relationship with CIA over the years.⁶⁷ (S)

(b)(1)

OSI Enters the Picture (b)(3)(n)

Jeffrey Mausner took over the Bolschwing investigation for the Department of Justice's new Office of Special Investigations (OSI) in the summer of 1979 and continued to examine the Agency's holdings.⁶⁸ By November 1979, Martin Mendelsohn approached CIA with several urgent questions regarding its affiliation with Bolschwing. In light of OSI's imminent suit against Bolschwing, the Department of Justice was concerned whether CIA had any objections to the legal proceedings or if the German could blackmail the Agency. Mendelsohn also expressed uncertainty as to whether CIA officials might testify on Bolschwing's behalf in view of his close connections with the Agency.⁶⁹ (S)

In January 1980, representatives from the CIA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) and the Directorate of Operations (DO) held a meeting with OSI to thrash out Mendelsohn's questions. Speaking for the Agency, the DO's [redacted] said that CIA did not plan to assist Bolschwing with his defense. Given the fact that Bolschwing's knowledge of CIA operations was dated, [redacted] doubted that the Agency had to worry about any form of blackmail.

(b)(3)(c)

our position on this matter is neutral, and our only interest is to protect sensitive and classified information concerning our former relationship with von Bolschwing.⁷² (S)

(b)(3)(c)

[redacted] warned, however, that the Agency did not know what Bolschwing's case officer, [redacted] [redacted] had told him when applying for a visa because [redacted] had since died. Likewise, the DO noted that the INS possessed an "auxiliary" file on Bolschwing at the time of his departure from Austria; neither CIA or the INS, however, could locate these records. The Agency expressed concern about this fact in the event Bolschwing's attorney subpoenaed all CIA material relevant to the case.⁷⁰ (S)

Mounting Pressure

Pressure mounted in 1980 as famous Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal announced Bolschwing's presence in the United States.⁷¹ Despite (b)(3)(c) verbal assurances in January 1980 that CIA had no objections to OSI's suit, the Agency failed to report this in writing. Pressed by OSI's new director, Allan A. Ryan, Jr., for an answer to his office's letter of 30 November 1979 about Bolschwing, CIA delayed any formal answer until the summer of 1980. At that time, OGC attorney [redacted] (b)(3)(c) tried to clarify some of OSI's concerns about the Agency's standing on this case and the availability of its records for use in court. He reiterated (b)(3)(c) point that "CIA has no objection to the initiation of proceedings against von Bolschwing. Indeed,

OSI still expressed great anxiety about the Agency's knowledge of Bolschwing's background at the time of his immigration in the mid-1950s. OSI's concerns resulted from another Nazi war criminal case when OSI dropped its suit against a former CIA agent because of the discovery of corroborating evidence in Agency files. Jeffrey Mausner submitted an eight-page letter to the Agency in which he emphasized that "most of our cases are based on a claim that the defendant misrepresented his Nazi background at the time of his entry into the US or at the time of his naturalization. It is," Mausner wrote, "therefore important to know exactly what INS, State Department, and CIA knew about von Bolschwing at the time of his entry and naturalization." OSI asked that the CIA search its records for any "preliminary questionnaire" used by the State Department's consular office in Munich to process his visa application in the second half of 1953. Likewise, the Department of Justice asked the Agency to produce an expert witness to discuss the recordkeeping procedures of the Alien Affairs Staff of the 1950s in order to testify as to how this office interfaced with INS. OSI clearly wanted to avoid any controversies regarding "third agency" material in CIA files.⁷³ (S)

The Agency, however, could not satisfy OSI's requests because the passage of time had rendered it difficult to reconstruct the complicated twists involved with Bolschwing's

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immigration. [redacted] was dead, and officers familiar with the work of the Alien Affairs Staff in the early 1950s had long since retired. While the Agency identified third agency material within its files and sent copies of these documents for review by the proper officers (including the State Department, Army, and NSA), CIA could not reconstruct the "auxiliary" file on Bolschwing.⁷⁴ (S)

In early 1981, OSI held an "on the record" interview with Bolschwing at his home in California. Represented by his son, attorney Golman V. von Bolschwing, OGC's [redacted] and the DO's [redacted] also attended the meeting. After discussing procedural issues, "Gus" Bolschwing did most of the talking and tried to defend his father's actions after nearly half a century. He labeled OSI's actions as "hypocrisy" because the details of Bolschwing's life had been known to American authorities before his arrival in the United States. "...and so I wonder as I sit here," the younger Bolschwing asked, "does the means justify the end? Do two wrongs make a right? It is just as difficult for my father at this point to prove his case, to disprove pieces of paper that are now 40 years old, as it was for certain individuals who did try to do justice to find and to prosecute Germans when there were no living witnesses or it was very hard to obtain living witnesses."

Bolschwing's son then described his father's deteriorating physical and mental condition which affected his ability to recollect events in his past. Subsequent questioning by Mausner confirmed that Bolschwing's memory about his membership in the Nazi Party and the SS was, indeed, fragile.⁷⁵ (S)

OSI Files Suit

OSI filed suit against Bolschwing in late May 1981 in the US District Court for the Eastern District of California. Allan Ryan and his attorneys linked Bolschwing's wartime activities in Germany and Rumania to German efforts to persecute the Jews. Bolschwing faced three counts of procuring his citizenship in 1959 through willful misrepresentation when he failed to declare his membership in the Nazi Party, the SS, the SD, and the RSHA—all organizations declared criminal by the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. The Department of Justice also accused Bolschwing of a lack of good moral character for his actions during World War II and for making false testimony. The court ordered the former German officer to appear at the US Attorney's Office in Sacramento for deposition and to provide all records, photographs, or other documents from 1932 to 1945.⁷⁶ (U)

Claiming Service as OSS Agent

To limit the damage to his case, Bolschwing presented a new twist which appeared in a Sacramento newspaper shortly after OSI filed its suit. Bolschwing now claimed that he had actually served as a "secret agent" for the OSS during the war. "It's not true," Bolschwing said, "I never served in the SS or Gestapo or SD (the intelligence branch of the SS). I did serve in the OSS for the Americans, and I did parachute into Austria." According to Bolschwing, "It was dangerous work in Germany (for the Americans)." In a separate statement, Bolschwing confided that he had even met William J. Donovan, later director of OSS in New

York before the outbreak of World War II. Allan Ryan, speaking for OSI, immediately denounced Bolschwing's statement. "What he said is not true. Our case relates from the middle 1930s through the war, and, during that period, he was not a double agent for the United States or anything like that. He was not affiliated in any way with the US Government."⁷⁷ (U)

Like many of OSI's other cases, the Bolschwing suit presented numerous legal complications. Bolschwing's attorneys, including his son, believed that they needed security clearances to speak with him about his relationship with the CIA during the postwar years. The defense also wanted access to all government records pertaining to Bolschwing which delayed the case because neither OSI or CIA were able to meet the request for production. OSI protested against the need for total production as opposed to using only those government records relevant to the court case. This prompted Bolschwing's attorney, Arthur J. Ruthenbeck, to tell the media in September 1981 that "my hands have been tied.... I'm just trying to get authorization for my client to talk with me." He added, "We're in a real Catch-22 situation. One arm of the government prosecutes the case, and another says you can't talk to your client."⁷⁸ OGC's [redacted]

(b)(3)(c) saw this situation in a different light: "Your hypothetical inability to represent your client, based upon your perception of unknown contractual limitations, similarly suggests a desire to infuse this litigation with premature issues."⁷⁹ Bolschwing, according to both OSI and CIA, was free to discuss all issues with his attorney, although the Department of Justice stipulated that classified material

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could not be discussed outside the courtroom. (U)

Records access and the defense's belief that it needed special permission to speak with Bolschwing hampered the suit; in the meantime, Bolschwing's health continued to deteriorate. At the behest of OSI, [redacted] prepared a classified affidavit to support the government's motion for a protective order. [redacted] the DO's Information Review Officer (IRO), cited the need to protect critical national security information from unauthorized disclosure as well as to protect confidential sources. The IRO commented that the "DO files concerning von Bolschwing contain extensive information on intelligence methodology in use by CIA." The Agency, [redacted] asserted, "...cannot, on the public record in this litigation, acknowledge the existence of such information without jeopardizing the sanctity of classified information."⁸⁰ (S)

CIA's efforts turned out to be unnecessary as OSI's director announced in late 1981 that Bolschwing voluntarily surrendered his American citizenship after admitting his membership in various Nazi organizations. As a consequence, OSI did not take Bolschwing to court, although Ryan agreed that the aging Bolschwing, diagnosed with a "progressive neurological condition," could remain in the United States until his health improved as to permit deportation. Ryan, in a prepared statement, refuted Bolschwing's last-minute claim that he had served as a wartime OSS agent. He also noted that the consent decision, offered by Bolschwing's defense, "was made by this office in consultation with higher authorities in the Department

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Bolschwing voluntarily surrendered his American citizenship after admitting his membership in various Nazi organizations.
”

of Justice and was not reviewed by, or submitted for the approval of any other government agency.”⁸¹ (U)

(b)(3)(c)

A Closed Case?

The case ended in March 1982, when Bolschwing died at the age of 72 of progressive supranuclear palsy.⁸² Despite his death, the case has great significance for the CIA as it raises questions about the Agency's recruitment policies during the early Cold War. During the 1970s and 1980s, the GAO conducted two major investigations to ascertain the role of Federal agencies in assisting Nazi war criminals.⁸³ In addition, the OSI had its own cases; needless to say, the Nazi war criminal investigations have attracted considerable Congressional, media, and public interest. The CIA, in particular, has been criticized for its postwar activities and secrecy. The Bolschwing case reinforced widespread perceptions that the Agency assisted Nazis after the war and also brought them to the United States.⁸⁴ Echoes of the Bolschwing case continue to reverberate today as several members of Congress have presented bills to force the Agency to open its records on all Nazi war criminals and collaborators. (U)

NOTES

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tria, believed that "the ones that got most of this misinformation were the ones with the most money (or black-market cigarettes): CIC and the Gehlen organization." (U)

2. For a lengthy study of the problems of false intelligence, see *Paper Mills and Fabricators*, a 1951 CIA study. CIA History Staff Records, HS/CSG-2375 and HS/CSG-2485, Job 83-00764R, Boxes 2 and 5 (respectively), CIA ARC (S).

3. As an example of one such controversial case, see David E. Murphy, Sergei A. Kondrashev, and George Bailey, *Battleground Berlin: CIA vs. KGB in the Cold War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997) about American agent Igor G. Orlov. (U)

4. [redacted] to Richard Helms, "Operation RUSTY," 18 March 1948, [redacted]
[redacted]
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5. [redacted]
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6. For further information about the early years of the West German intelligence service, see Kevin C. Ruffner, "A Controversial Liaison Relationship: American Intelligence and the Gehlen Organization, 1945-49," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (1997), pp. 69-84. (S).

7. The Army's CIC, in particular, resented the development of RUSTY and the free range that its agents operated in Germany.
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12. Undated, unsigned, typed note in
[redacted] (b)(3)(c)

13. A synopsis of Bolschwing's life and Nazi career is found in Allen A. Ryan, Jr., *Quiet Neighbors: Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America*

- (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), pp. 218-239 (U). (b)(1)
14. See chief of station, Karlsruhe, Chief, FBM, "ODEUM Personnel—Otto Albrecht Baron von Bolschwing," [redacted] 3 October 1949, enclosing Bolschwing, "Statement on Life History," 14 September 1949, [redacted] (b)(1) (b)(3)(c)
15. Bolschwing received certificates from various American units in Austria, including the 71st and 410th Infantry Regiments for service in the summer of 1945. He later claimed to have worked with the 44th Infantry Division from April through June 1945; the 103rd Infantry Division in July and August 1945; the 84th Infantry Division until December 1945; and, finally, with 3rd Army Intelligence through December 1946. One of the officers who provided Bolschwing with a certificate, [redacted] (b)(6) of the 71st Infantry Regiment, later sponsored him as an immigrant (U).
16. Bolschwing, "Statement on Life History." (U) (b)(1) (b)(3)(c)
17. Undated, unsigned memorandum, "UNREST (Bolschwing) Files." [redacted]
18. Undated, unsigned, untitled report, with letterhead "Central Intelligence Agency Washington 25, D.C." (b)(1) (b)(3)(c)
19. [redacted] (b)(1) (b)(3)(c)
- D. E. Pratt to S. B. Bossard, Rumanian Projects Controlled by von Bolschwing," 15 November 1949, [redacted]
20. [redacted]

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21. [redacted]

22. [redacted]

23. [redacted]

24. [redacted]

25. *The German Intelligence Services.* [redacted] (b)(1) reports on German Abwehr and SD/SS intelligence personnel, organizations, and operations compiled during World War II. The "German Primer" was used by Allied intelligence during the war and remained in use afterwards. [redacted] (b)(1) (b)(3)(n)

26. Chief of station, Karlsruhe, to chief of base, Pullach, [redacted] File Checks," 24 April 1950. (b)(1) (b)(3)(n)

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	28.		33.	
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		An Aus- trian report noted Bolschwing's affiliation with the "CIC" in Salzburg and that he did not undergo denazification because of his claims to have been an active underground fighter. Report also states Bolschwing's SS rank and that he served in the SD. See chief of station, Vienna, to chief of sta- tion, Karlsruhe, "Austrian Police Report on Otto von Bolschwing," 12 November 1950,		
(b)(1) (b)(3)(c) (b)(3)(n)	30.		34	38
(b)(1) (b)(3)(c) (b)(3)(n)	31.		35	39
32.				40. Chief of station, Vienna, to Chief, EE, "GROSSBAHN—U.S. Citizen- ship," 29 September 1952,
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Bolschwing

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42. [redacted]
43. [redacted]
44. [redacted]
45. [redacted]
46. [redacted]
47. Cable, DCI to Senior Representative Austria, August 1953, [redacted]
(b)(1)
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48. Chief, EE, to Director of Security, ATTN: Alien Affairs Officer, "Request for Aid in Facilitating US Entry for Agent," [undated], in [redacted]
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49. Chief of base to Chief, EE, "Otto von Bolschwing—Local Traces," 28 September 1953, [redacted]
(b)(1)
(b)(3)(c)
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50. [redacted]
(b)(1)
(b)(3)(c)
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51. [redacted]
52. *Ibid.*
53. The CIA also informed the State Department about Bolschwing's immigration and Nazi record. See Cable, Senior Representative Austria to DCI, [redacted] 20 November 1953, [redacted]
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(b)(3)(c)
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54. Chief of base, Salzburg, to Chief, EE, "GROSSBAHN—Termination," 29 October 1953, [redacted]
(b)(1)
(b)(3)(c)
(b)(3)(n)
55. [redacted]
(b)(1)
(b)(3)(c)
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56. Chief of base, Salzburg, to Chief, EE, "GROSSBAHN—Progress Report for the Period 1 October to 30 November 1953," 10 December 1953, [redacted] and chief of base, Salzburg, to Chief, EE, "GROSSBAHN—Termination," 10 December 1953, [redacted]
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(b)(3)(c)
57. [redacted]
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58. [redacted]
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Chief, EE to FI/Plans, [redacted]
"Termination of Project GROSS-BAHN," 22 December 1953, [redacted]
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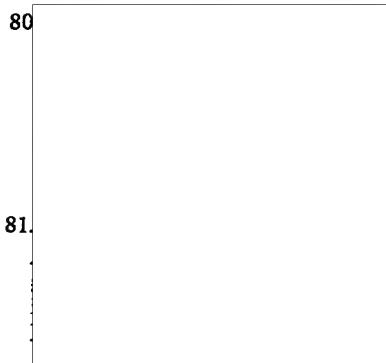
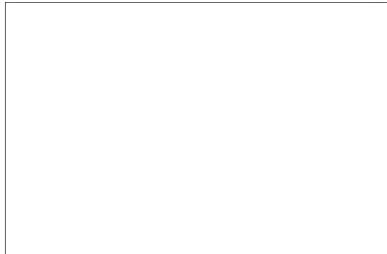
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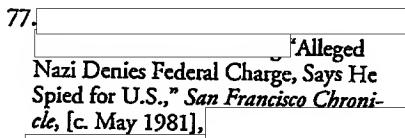
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74. The identity and location of the
“auxiliary” file remains a mystery.

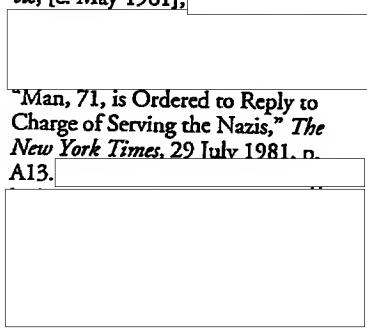
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82. Otto von Bolschwing; Ex-Captain in Nazi SS," *The New York Times*, 10 March 1982, p. B-5 (U).

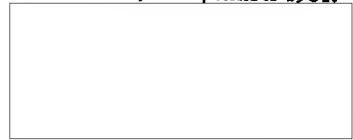
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83. United States GAO, Comptroller General of the United States, *Widespread Conspiracy to Obstruct Probes of Alleged Nazi War Criminals Not Supported by Available Evidence—Controversy May Continue*, GGD-78-73 (Washington, DC: GAO, 1978) and *Nazis and Axis Collaborators Were Used to Further US Anti-Communist Objectives in Europe—Some Immigrated to the United States*, GAO/GGD-85-66 (Washington, DC: GAO, 1985). [redacted]

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78. S. Lynn Walker, "Accused Nazi's Defense Hampered by CIA Order Not to Talk, Attorney Says," *Sacramento Union*, 10 September 1981.

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(b)(3)(c)

79. [redacted]

84. Christopher Simpson, *Blowback: The First Full Account of America's Recruitment of Nazis, and its Disastrous Effect on Our Domestic and Foreign Policy* (New York: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1988), pp. 252-259 (U).

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